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THE WEBSTER STATUE.



T. BALL SCULPTOR

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BRONZE STATUE OF DANIEL WEBSTER

ERECTED IN CENTRAL PARK, NEW YORK, JULY 4TH 1893.

BY JOHN W. BURMAN.

FOR THE CITY OF NEW YORK, BY THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE PARKS.

PROCEEDINGS
AT THE
INAUGURATION OF THE STATUE
OF
DANIEL WEBSTER,

ERECTED IN THE CENTRAL PARK, NEW YORK,
JULY FOURTH, 1876,

BY GORDON W. BURNHAM,

AND BY HIM PRESENTED TO THE CITY, NOVEMBER TWENTY-FIFTH, 1876.



NEW YORK:
D. APPLETON AND COMPANY.
MDCCCLXXVI.

THE WEBSTER STATUE.

DANIEL WEBSTER was born in Salisbury, New Hampshire, on the 18th day of January, 1782, and died in Marshfield, Massachusetts, on the 24th day of October, 1852.

His life was devoted to the public service, and no man's service was greater. He was the expounder and defender of the Constitution of the United States. His ability and eloquence postponed the conflict which threatened its ruin; and he, more than any other man, may be said to have created the sentiment of affectionate attachment to the Constitution and the Union it established, which carried the nation safely through that ter-

rible trial of its strength and power. First in that war of opinion out of which the true principles of the American Government came, as though tried by fire—first in the peaceful triumphs of the cabinet, the Senate, and the forum, those victories of peace no less renowned than war—if any man's name and memory deserve to be cherished and honored by every American citizen, they are those of Daniel Webster.

Sharing in this estimate of the great statesman's character, and his relation to the history of the whole country, Mr. GORDON WEBSTER BURNHAM, a native of New England, and a citizen of New York, conceived the idea of a statue, to be erected in the chief city of America, which should preserve and transmit to future generations the characteristic form and features of the man, and stand as a lasting memorial of his work.

Mr. Burnham's suggestions and offers to those who were most likely to promote such a design, although cordially approved and gratefully recognized, produced no substantial result during many years; and, in 1873,

he determined to carry out his original purpose in his own way, and at his own expense.

After some preliminary conferences with the Department of Public Parks, in which he indicated his desire to secure an appropriate site for the statue in the Central Park, he addressed the following letter to the President of the Board:

HENRY G. STEBBINS, ESQ.,

President of the Department of Public Parks.

DEAR SIR: In accordance with the suggestions heretofore made in conversation with your predecessor, Mr. Wales, and yourself, I respectfully offer for the Central Park a bronze statue of DANIEL WEBSTER, of colossal size, with an appropriate granite pedestal, the whole work to be executed by the best artist in a manner altogether worthy the grandeur of the subject and the conspicuous position it is designed to occupy at the lower entrance to the Mall.

This position, proposed by Mr. President Wales, and cordially approved by yourself and other gentlemen of no less excellent taste and judgment, will exactly suit my purpose in devoting so large a sum of money as will be required to adorn the Park, and to honor the

memory of one of America's noblest sons; whose patriotic eloquence, devoted to the defence of her institutions during his life, will continue to animate and inspire to the latest time that sentiment of "Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable," which has saved the nation, and will continue to protect it.

I trust that my offer to place this statue on the site proposed will meet the speedy acceptance of your Department, in order that the work may be duly completed by the Fourth of July, 1876—the Centennial of American Independence.

I have the honor to be, with great respect,

Your obedient servant,

GORDON W. BURNHAM.

NO. 128 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, *July* 25, 1874.

This letter found its way to the press, and was copied and applauded with enthusiasm all over the country, as well as in the city of New York. The public opinion thus warmly expressed finally silenced all doubts, removed all technical and official objections, and left Mr. Burnham free to complete his work.

He immediately gave the order for the statue to Mr.

Thomas Ball, of Florence, Italy, an artist of distinguished merit, whose previous representations of Mr. Webster in painting and sculpture had won for their author an exalted reputation. Mr. Burnham has not been disappointed in his expectation that Mr. Ball would crown the labors and studies of a lifetime in a portrait-statue worthy of its noble subject, alike in person and character one of the greatest of the sons of men.

It was intended that the statue should be completed in time for its inauguration on the National Birthday, the Centennial Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, Fourth of July, 1876, and the contracts were framed accordingly with all the parties engaged in the work; but the delays and disappointments incident to all such operations compelled postponements, from time to time, until the 25th of November, the great local anniversary of New York, Evacuation-Day.

The ceremony of inauguration took place on that day, at two o'clock. The assembly was called to order by President WILLIAM R. MARTIN, who spoke as follows:

“To-day, in the chief city of his country, we place on a pedestal of granite, standing on the basic rock, the statue of the man whose learning and eloquence did so much to establish the principles of the Constitution on enduring foundations—did so much to fix in every heart that love for and faith in the Union which, like love and faith always, in the crisis, were our salvation.

“Surmounting all discord of interests and opinions, through the blood of the Revolution, a century ago, our fathers laid the foundations of the Republic.

“In the middle of the century these foundations were opened, fundamental principles were agitated anew, were resettled, and planted in the hearts of the people. In our day, they have survived the severest tests to which Liberty and Union could have been subjected. They have proved the strongest of all the forces, natural and moral, by which we are surrounded.

“Through this course of our history there was room, there was need, for a man—for many men, but for one supremely eminent—for the duty of standing between

the past and the future, between the two wars—the first successful to build up, the second failing to overthrow; need of a man with heart large enough to embrace all, mind large enough to comprehend all, and, upon all principles and all duties of our pride and our hopes, to build the temple and within it the altar of the country, before which all hearts are one, and all discordant interests disappear.

“It is the noble acts of such a man that we to-day commemorate.”

MR. GORDON W. BURNHAM was then introduced, and thus addressed the Mayor:

“MR. MAYOR: Having always been a great admirer of Mr. Webster, and having a strong desire that something should be done to perpetuate his memory, I have caused this statue to be erected, which I trust may be as enduring as his fame, and the granite upon which it stands. I now have the pleasure, through you, of pre-

senting this statue of Daniel Webster, with its pedestal, to the city of New York. I commit it to your guardianship, trusting that it may be faithfully cared for and protected in all time to come."

The statue was then unveiled by THOMAS BROWNELL BURNHAM, the donor's youngest son.

Mayor WICKHAM, in accepting the gift, said:

"MR. BURNHAM AND GENTLEMEN: The city of New York accepts this statue with many acknowledgments for the munificence and public spirit which are shown now, not for the first time, by the donor, and with profound regard and reverence for the remarkable man whose features and figure it so admirably reproduces. The time is well chosen for reminding the people of all these United States, as this image does, of the greatness of the intellect and resources of Daniel Webster, and of the glorious use to which he put them in the public service. In the midst of the confusion made by con-

tending parties, who struggle now for power in the Republic, this monument to the most illustrious of the sons of New England is eloquent of the moderation, the wisdom, and the abounding patriotism of his counsels, which helped to guide the country through so many dangers now happily passed. And, in the new perils to which constitutional government is to-day exposed, to turn the thoughts of men again to the great expounder of the Constitution himself, as these impressive proceedings will turn them, cannot but be productive of good influences. The city will guard and keep this noble gift with watchful care, that generations yet to come may learn the lessons taught by Webster."

President Martin then introduced Hon. WILLIAM M. EVARTS, who delivered the following address:

"MR. MAYOR AND FELLOW-CITIZENS: I congratulate you, Mr. Burnham, upon the prosperous execution of a noble purpose. You did me the honor, in meditating

this grand gift to the city and to the country, to ask my concurrence in this munificent act. I know that it proceeded, in your intention, from nothing but admiration of Mr. Webster, because he was a great servant of his country, and from your patriotism, that desired to perpetuate his influence in a form that should be as enduring and as eloquent as any preservation of his memory to his countrymen could possibly be. I congratulate you, Mr. Mayor, and the city of New York, for the grateful and graceful performance of a duty now for the second and third time of receiving noble monuments to the fame of great citizens of this country, and the acceptance of permanent and impressive decorations of our public places. And you, fellow-citizens, I congratulate upon the benignant sky and the genial air that in these last days of November, so apt to be the saddest of the year, have for this occasion given us the brightness and the joy of opening spring. I congratulate you more deeply, that you and your children, from generation to generation, are here to renew the lessons of patriotism and of duty

which Mr. Webster in his lifetime taught so wisely and so well. I congratulate you upon this evidence that public spirit does not fail in a republic. It has been the reproach of equal society that it bred selfishness, and it has been a maxim that munificence belonged to kings and to nobles, and that splendor and elegance and magnificence flowed downward, and could never be the growth of an equal society; but our history has in this, as in so many other things, falsified these maxims of our race. Where will you find wider and better, more numerous or more noble, instances of charity, of public spirit, and of contributions to the public taste and public enjoyment, than this Republic of ours presents everywhere? And where will you find in other lands instances worthy to be recorded with this of Mr. Burnham, where a single citizen, doing his share as one of the people, for the good of the nation, has made and planned as great and noble a gift?

“Mr. Mayor, on this occasion we find no need of distinct eulogy. Whoever speaks to any of our countrymen

of Mr. Webster, of his life, of his public services, of his genius, and of his fame, can tell them nothing new, nor can he hope to enlarge or deepen their admiring homage which attended him through a whole generation in his lifetime, and in the quarter of a century that has passed since his death has hallowed his memory. Nor, were it otherwise, would anything but the briefest commemoration and the simplest eulogy befit the occasion. This noble restoration of his imposing presence, and the solemn echo which arises in every mind, of the last words which passed his lips, 'I still live!'—these speak to us to-day; and all other oratory is superfluous. There he stands, as he stood for a whole lifetime of assured fame, in the full blaze of a whole people's attention, crowned by his Maker with glory and honor—as he stood in the courts, in the Senate, in the popular assemblies, at the helm of state, amid the crowds that followed his steps in every public concourse. And yet I could not but yield, Mr. Burnham, to your request that I should share with Mr. Webster's friend, and our friend, Mr. Winthrop, in bringing to attention some

of the principal traits of Mr. Webster's character, some of the prominent instances of his great public services.

“My first knowledge of Mr. Webster, in the way of personal association with him, occurred just as I was leaving college, and he, in 1837, was making that remarkable progress from the Capitol at Washington to his home in the East, on which his steps were delayed in every city by the instant demands of the people that they should see him and that he should speak to them. I had, as a schoolboy in Boston, been familiar with his person as that of the principal citizen of that place, but in after-life it came to be my fortune to be associated with him in public relations only during the last few years of his life. I can bear testimony that, without arrogance, yet full of dignity, he never sought to enhance, but always to lessen, the imposing influence which his mien and his fame impressed on every one. The kindness of his manner and his affectionate attention to every claim made upon his duty or his favor, none who knew him will ever forget; and if my voice now can for a

moment recall more nearly than the general recollection of his countrymen might do, what was great and valuable in his character and in his public service, it is an office both of affection and duty that I should so do.

“No one brings to his thoughts the life of Mr. Webster without instantly dwelling upon the three principal great departments of highest influence in which he moved, and where he showed his power, and shed in a shower of beneficence upon his countrymen and their institutions the great effulgence of his intellect and the warmth of his patriotism. I mean, of course, as a lawyer, as a statesman, and as an orator. No doubt, in the history of the country, names can be recalled which, considered singly and simply in relation to what makes up the character and authority of the lawyer, may compete with or may surpass Mr. Webster. No one can divide with Chief-Justice Marshall the immense power of judicial penetration which he maintained through a life lengthened beyond eighty years; and eminent men of learning, of weight, of authority with the profession and with the

public, may be named that at least occupy, in the simple character of lawyers, for learning and judgment, as elevated a place as Mr. Webster. But I am quite sure that there is not, in the general judgment of the profession, nor in the conforming opinion of his countrymen, any lawyer that, in the magnitude of his causes, in the greatness of their public character, in the immensity of their influence upon the fortunes of the country, or in the authority which his manner of forensic eloquence produced in courts and over courts, can be placed in the same rank with Mr. Webster. As a statesman, we must include in our mention as well the character and the part of the party leader, as that of the guide and guardian of the public interests in the more elevated plane of the councils of the country. And in this, whatever we may say of the great men who, at the birth of the nation and in the framing of the Constitution, and then, with lives prolonged, attending the first steps of the progress of the new-born nation, established their own fame and contributed to the greatness and the safety of the

country, we shall find no man in our generation—no man coming down to our generation from that preceding one—who has held such a share of influence in the popular assemblies, in the counsels of the party, in the State, or in the Senate, or in the discharge of the duties of a Minister of State, who can at all contest with Mr. Webster the preëminent position of the statesman of the whole country, for the whole country, and in results which the whole country has felt. And then, when we come to oratory, he combined the intellectual, the moral, and the personal traits which make up that power in the nation, which gave to one Grecian above all others of his countrymen—Pericles—the title of Olympian. Who so much in our time and in our nation has combined all those traits so often severed as Mr. Webster? Whether he lifted his voice, *mirum spargens sonum*, in the court, or in the Senate, or at the hustings, or in the oratory of public occasions, and to select audiences, he spoke as one having authority with his people; and that authority was always recognized and always obeyed.

“To these three recognized and familiar departments of his preëminence we must add a fourth—his clear title in the sphere of literature to be held as one of the greatest authors and writers of our mother-tongue that America has produced. We all recognize the great distinction in this regard of Burke and of Macaulay. In the flow of their eloquence as writers, and in the splendors of their diction, Mr. Webster did not approach them, nor would he have desired to imitate them. But I propose to the most competent critics of the nation, that they can find nowhere six octavo volumes of printed literary production of an American, that contains as much noble and as much beautiful imagery, as much warmth of rhetoric, and of magnetic impression upon the reader, as are to be found in the collected writings and speeches of Daniel Webster.

“But, fellow-citizens, as a citizen and as a patriot, Mr. Webster was greatest in the opinion of his countrymen in his life, and greatest in the judgment of posterity since his death. What are all those mere gifts of intellect,

however vast; what these advantages of person, of education, of position, and of power in the country, if their possessor fails or falls short in his devotion to his country, and in his service to the State? And he that will look through the preserved, recorded evidence of Mr. Webster's life, will see at once that, from his youth to his death, he was as full of public spirit and as full of public labors, as if his life had not been busy and important in its private, professional, and personal relations. He served the State, and labored for and loved it from boyhood up. He withheld no service, he shrunk from no labor, he drew no nice distinctions as to opportunities or occasions. Whenever a word was to be spoken, and could be usefully spoken, to the American people, in the lecture-room, on the anniversary occasion, in the public assemblies, in the cities and in the country, on excursions and progresses through large stretches of our territory, North and South, East and West, always on an elevated stage, and in a conspicuous cause, he gave his great powers to this service of the people.

“What could exceed the breadth and generosity of his views, the comprehensiveness, the nationality, of his relations to the people! Born in the Northeastern corner of New England, the Northeastern corner of the country, seated for the practice of his profession and for his domestic life in the city of Boston, on the very outside rim of our country’s territory—I defy any one to find, from the moment he left his provincial college at Dartmouth, to the time that he was buried on the shore of Marshfield, a time when that great heart did not beat, and that great intellect did not work, for the service equally of all the American people, North and South, East and West. We do not find all the great men of this country thus large and liberal in the comprehension of their public spirit, thus constant and warm in the exercise of patriotic feeling. I cannot even allude to the immense and the frequent public services that Mr. Webster performed; but I have this to say, that I would rather that the men and the youth of this country should read the peroration of Mr. Webster’s speech in reply to

Hayne, and the peroration of his speech for the country and its peace on the 7th of March, 1850, than any equal passages in all the text-books and all the oratory of our politics from the time he died until now. I would like to have anybody that has been instructed by the last twenty-five years see if he could portray the evils, the weaknesses, the woes of nullification under the Constitution, the wretchedness and the falsity of the claims and schemes of peaceful secession, better than Webster could do and did do in advance. I would like to see one touch of art, one word of eloquence, one proof or reason that can be added under this stern teaching of a quarter of a century, that is not found in those great speeches now. His countrymen questioned him, his countrymen maligned him; but it was his country that he loved, and he would not curse it for anybody's cursing him.

“On Boston Common, in July, 1852, just before his death, when he stood in the face of Boston people, whom he had served for thirty years, he used these words: ‘My manner of political life is known to you

all. I leave it to my country, to posterity, and to the world, to see whether it will or will not stand the test of time and truth.' Twenty-five years of our history have shed a flood of light upon the past, and emblazoned anew the records of Mr. Webster's public life. I shall not rehearse them, but I say this to you, and I challenge contradiction, that from the beginning to the end that record is true to the great principle that presided over the birth of the nation, and found voice in the Declaration of Independence; that was wrought into the very fabric of the Constitution; that carried us, with unmutilated territory, and undefiled Constitution, and unbroken authority of the Government, through the sacrifices and the terrors and the woes of civil war; that will sustain us through all the heats and agues which attend the steps of the nation to perfect health and strength. The great principle embossed in enduring granite on this pedestal, and from the time it was announced from those eloquent lips, is firmly fixed in the consciences and hearts of this people: 'Liberty and

union, now and forever, one and inseparable.' The great names of our Revolutionary history—the signers of the Declaration of Independence, the framers of the Constitution, the wise men who, surviving from that generation, confirmed the progress of the country under its Constitution and its new liberties—no American will allow their fame to be disparaged or divided; and of the men that followed them up to your time, how many do you owe great obligations to! How much to Clay and Adams! How much to Jackson and Wright! How much to Seward and Chase, and all their contemporaries! But if I were to name two men whose services were incomparably above that of all others in making this new experiment of free government and of paper constitutions a living power to a great and strenuous nation—two that could not have been spared, though all others remained—I should say that to the great Chief-Justice Marshall, and to the great forensic, popular, parliamentary defender and expounder of the Constitution, Daniel Webster, we most owe what we now enjoy. Who shall

deny to him the title, 'Of our constituted liberties the greatest defender?'

“And now, what shall we say of this great man in the personal and private traits of his character? I should say of Mr. Webster that, if there were one single trait conspicuous in him and preëminent as compared with others who have made for themselves great names in history, it would be the abundant charity of his nature. He never assumed for himself in private intercourse, or in public speech, any superiority. He never tolerated in his presence, and he never practised, either evil speech or evil surmise. His frown followed even their casual introduction about the table and in public discussions, and he never tolerated any confusion between intellectual dissection of an argument and moral inculcation of the reasoner. I do not know that one should question ambition, for it is the public passion by which great public talents are made useful to a people. But I will say of Mr. Webster, that he seemed to me never to have any ambition but that which is an inseparable part of the

possession of great powers of public usefulness, but that which is sanctioned by the injunction that great talents are not to be buried in the earth, and by the requirement that the light which God has given that it should shine before men is to be placed on a candlestick.

“And now within the narrower circle, not ill-represented here in the crowd before me, and on this stand, of those who enjoyed close and friendly intercourse with Mr. Webster; who knew, better than the world knew, the greatness of his powers and the nobleness of his nature—shall we be guilty of any disrespect to the living, shall it not be pardoned to affection, if we say that the associations with those who survive seem to us but little, compared with the memory of him whose friendship we remember, and whose fame we rehearse? ‘*Eheu! quanto minus cum reliquis versari, quam tui meminisse.*’”

The Hon. ROBERT C. WINTHROP, of Boston, was then introduced. He spoke as follows:

“I am here, Mr. Mayor, fellow-countrymen, and friends, with no purpose of trespassing very long on your attention. I was doubtful almost to the last moment whether I should be able to be here at all to-day, and I am afraid that I have neither voice nor strength for many words in the open air.

“But, indeed, the address of this occasion has been made. It has been made by one to whom it was most appropriately assigned, and who had every title and every talent for making it. It was peculiarly fit that this grand gift to your magnificent Park should be acknowledged and welcomed by a citizen of New York—one of whom you are all justly proud, an eminent advocate and jurist, a distinguished statesman and public speaker, with the laurels of the Centennial oration at Philadelphia still fresh on his brow. The utterances of this hour might well have ended with him.

“I could not, however, find it in my heart to refuse altogether the repeated and urgent request of your munificent fellow-citizen, Mr. Burnham, that I would be

here on the platform with Mr. Evarts and himself, to-day, to witness the unveiling of this noble statue, and to add a few words in commemoration of him whom it so vividly and so impressively portrays.

“Mr. Burnham has done me the honor to call me to his assistance on this occasion, as one who had enjoyed some peculiar opportunities for knowing the illustrious statesman to whose memory he is paying these large and sumptuous honors. And it is true, my friends, that my personal associations with Mr. Webster reach back to a distant day. I recall him as a familiar visitor in the homes of more than one of those with whom I was most nearly connected, when I was but a schoolboy, on his first removal to Boston, in 1817. I recall the deep impressions produced on all who heard him, and communicated to all who did not hear him, by his great efforts in the Constitutional Convention of Massachusetts, and, soon afterward, by his noble discourse at Plymouth Rock, in 1820. I was myself in the crowd which gazed at him, and listened to him with admiration, when he

laid the corner-stone of the Monument on Bunker Hill, in presence of Lafayette, in 1824. I was myself in the throng which hung with rapture on his lips as he pronounced that splendid eulogy on Adams and Jefferson, in Faneuil Hall, in 1826. Entering his office as a law-student in 1828, I was under his personal tuition during three of the busiest and proudest years of his life. From 1840 to 1850, I was associated with him in the Congress of the United States; and I may be pardoned for not forgetting that it was then my privilege and my pride to succeed him in the Senate, when he was last called into the Cabinet, as Secretary of State, by President Fillmore.

“I have thus no excuse, my friends, for not knowing something, for not knowing much, of Daniel Webster. Of those who knew him longer or better than I did, few, certainly, remain among the living; and I could hardly have reconciled it with what is due to his memory, or with what is due to my own position, if I had refused—I will not say to bear testimony to his wonder-

ful powers and his great public services, for all such testimony would be as superfluous as to bear testimony to the light of the sun in the skies above us—but if I had declined to give expression to the gratification and delight with which the sons of New England, and the sons of Massachusetts and of Boston especially, and I, as one of them, cannot fail to regard this most signal commemoration of one, whose name and fame were so long and so peculiarly dear to us.

“Neither Mr. Evarts nor I have come here to-day, my friends, to hold up Mr. Webster—much as we may have admired or loved him—as one with whom we have always agreed, as one whose course we have uniformly approved, or in whose career we have seen nothing to regret. Our testimony is all the more trustworthy—my own certainly is—that we have sometimes differed from him. But we are here to recognize him as one of the greatest men our country has ever produced; as one of the grandest figures in our whole national history; as one who, for intellectual power, had no superior, and

hardly an equal, in our own land or in any other land, during his day and generation; as one whose written and spoken words, so fitly embalmed ‘for a life beyond life’ in the six noble volumes edited by Edward Everett, are among the choicest treasures of our language and literature; and, still more and above all, as one who rendered inestimable services to his country—at one period, vindicating its rights and preserving its peace with foreign nations by the most skilful and masterly diplomacy; at another period, rescuing its Constitution from overthrow, and repelling triumphantly the assaults of nullification and disunion, by overpowering argument and matchless eloquence.

“Mr. Webster made many marvellous manifestations of himself in his busy life of threescore years and ten. Convincing arguments in the courts of law, brilliant appeals to popular assemblies, triumphant speeches in the Halls of Legislation, magnificent orations and discourses of commemoration or ceremony—are thickly scattered along his whole career. I rejoice to remember how

many of them I have heard from his own lips, and how much inspiration and instruction I have derived from them. To have seen and heard him on one of his field-days, was a privilege which no one will undervalue who ever enjoyed it. There was a power, a breadth, a beauty, a perfection, in some of his efforts, when he was at his best, which distanced all approach and rendered rivalry ridiculous.

“And if the style and tone and temper of our political discussions are to be once more elevated, refined, and purified—and we all know how much room there is for elevation and refinement—we must go back, for our examples and models, at least as far as the days of that great Senatorial Triumvirate—Clay, Calhoun, and Webster. There were giants in those days; but none of them forgot that, though ‘it is excellent to have a giant’s strength, it is tyrannous to use it like a giant.’

“Among those who have been celebrated as orators or public speakers, in our own days or in other days, there have been many diversities of gifts, and many

diversities of operations. There have been those who were listened to wholly for their intellectual qualities, for the wit or the wisdom, the learning or the philosophy, which characterized their efforts. There have been those whose main attraction was a curious felicity and facility of illustration and description, adorned by the richest gems which could be gathered by historical research or classical study. There have been those to whom the charms of manner and the graces of elocution and the melody of voice were the all-sufficient recommendations to attention and applause. And there have been those who owed their success more to opportunity and occasion, to some stirring theme or some exciting emergency, than to any peculiar attributes of their own. But Webster combined everything. No thoughts more profound and weighty. No style more terse and telling. No illustrations more vivid and clear-cut. No occasions more august and momentous. No voice more deep and thrilling. No manner more impressive and admirable. No presence so grand and majestic, as his.

“That great brain of his, as I have seen it working, whether in public debate or in private converse, seemed to me often like some mighty machine—always ready for action, and almost always in action, evolving much material from its own resources and researches, and eagerly appropriating and assimilating whatever was brought within its reach, producing and reproducing the richest fabrics with the ease and certainty, the precision and the condensing energy, of a perfect Corliss engine—such a one as many of us have just seen presiding so magically and so majestically over the Exposition at Philadelphia.

“And he put his own crown-stamp on almost everything he uttered. There was no mistaking one of Webster’s great efforts. There is no mistaking them now. They will be distinguished, in all time to come, like pieces of old gold or silver plate, by an unmistakable mint-mark. He knew, like the casters or forgers of yonder statue, not only how to pour forth burning words and blazing thoughts, but so to blend and fuse and weld

together his facts and figures, his illustrations and arguments, his metaphors and subject-matter, as to bring them all out at last into one massive and enduring image of his own great mind!

“He was by no means wanting in labor and study; and he often anticipated the earliest dawn in his preparations for an immediate effort. I remember how humorously he told me once, that the cocks in his own yard often mistook his morning candle for the break of day, and began to crow lustily as he entered his office, though it were two hours before sunrise. Yet he frequently did wonderful things off-hand; and one might often say of him, in the words of an old poet:

‘His noble negligences teach

What others’ toils despair to reach.’

“Not in our own land, only, Mr. Mayor and fellow-countrymen, were the preëminent powers of Mr. Webster recognized and appreciated. Brougham, and Lyndhurst,

and the late Lord Derby, as I had abundant opportunity of knowing, were no underraters of his intellectual grasp and grandeur. I remember well, too, the casual testimony of a venerable prelate of the English Church—the late Dr. Harcourt, then Archbishop of York—who said to me thirty years ago in London: ‘I met your wonderful friend, Mr. Webster, for only five minutes; but in those five minutes I learned more of American institutions, and of the peculiar working of the American Constitution, than in all that I had ever heard or read from any or all other sources.’

“Of his discourse on the Second Centennial Anniversary of the Landing of the Pilgrims on Plymouth Rock, John Adams wrote, in acknowledging a copy of it, ‘Mr. Burke is no longer entitled to the praise of being the most consummate orator of modern times.’ And, certainly, from the date of that discourse, he stood second, as an orator, to no one who spoke the English language. But it is peculiarly and preëminently as the expounder and defender of the Constitution of the United

States, in January, 1830, that he will be remembered and honored as long as that Constitution shall hold a place in the American heart, or a place on the pages of the world's history.

“Mr. Webster once said—and perhaps more than once—that there was not an article, a section, a clause, a phrase, a word, a syllable, or even a comma, of that Constitution, which he had not studied and pondered in every relation and in every construction of which it was susceptible.

“Born at the commencement of the year 1782, at the very moment when the necessity of such an instrument for preserving our Union, and making us a nation, was first beginning to be comprehended and felt by the patriots who had achieved our independence—just as they had fully discovered the utter insufficiency of the old Confederation, and how mere a rope of sand it was; born in that very year in which the Legislature of your own State of New York, under the lead of your gallant Philip Schuyler, at the prompting of your grand Alex-

ander Hamilton, was adopting the very first resolutions passed by any State in favor of such an instrument—it might almost be said that the natal air of the Constitution was his own natal air. He drank in its spirit with his earliest breath, and seemed born to comprehend, expound, and defend it. No Roman schoolboy ever committed to memory the laws of the Twelve Tables more diligently and thoroughly than did he the Constitution of his country. He had it by heart in more senses of the words than one, and every part and particle of it seemed only less precious and sacred to him than his Bible.

“John Adams himself was not more truly the Colossus of Independence in the Continental Congress of 1776, than Daniel Webster was the Colossus of the Constitution and the Union in the Federal Congress of 1830.

“For other speeches, of other men, it might perhaps be claimed, that they have had the power to inflame and precipitate war—foreign war or civil war. Of Webster’s great speech, as a Senator of Massachusetts, in 1830—

and of that alone, I think—it can be said, that it averted and postponed civil war for a whole generation. Yes, it repressed the irrepressible conflict itself for thirty years! And when that dire calamity came upon us at last, though the voice of the master had so long been hushed, that speech still supplied the most convincing arguments and the most inspiring incitements for a resolute defense of the Union. It is not yet exhausted. There is argument enough, there is inspiration enough, in it still, if only they be heeded, to carry us along, as a united people, at least for another century. In that speech ‘he still lives;’ and lives for the Constitution and the Union of his country.

“Why, my friends, not even the dynamite and rend-rock and Vulcan powder of your scientific and gallant Newton were more effective in blasting and shattering your Hell-Gate reef, and opening the way for the safe navigation of yonder bay, than that speech of Webster was in exploding the doctrines of nullification, and clearing the channel for our ship of state to sail on safely,

prosperously, triumphantly, whether in sunshine or in storm !

“Beyond all comparison, it was *the speech* of our Constitutional Age. ‘*Nil simile aut secundum.*’ It was James Madison, of Virginia, himself, who said of it in a letter at the time : ‘It crushes nullification, and must hasten an abandonment of secession.’ Whatever remained to be done, in the progress of events, for the repression of menacing designs or of overt acts, was grandly done by the resolute patriotism and iron will of President Jackson, whose proclamation and policy, to that end, Mr. Webster sustained with all his might. They were the legitimate conclusions of his own great argument.

“Of other and later efforts of Mr. Webster I have neither time nor inclination to speak. There are too many coals still burning beneath the smouldering embers of some of his more recent controversies, for any one to rake them rashly open on such an occasion as this. I was by no means in full accord with his memorable

7th of March speech, and my views of it to-day are precisely what he knew they were in 1850. But no differences of opinion on that day, or on any other day, ever impaired my admiration of his powers, my confidence in his patriotism, my earnest wishes for his promotion, nor the full assurance which I felt that he would administer the Government with perfect integrity, as well as with consummate ability. What a President he would have made for a Centennial Year! What a tower of strength he would have been, to our Constitution and our country, in all the perplexities and perils through which we have recently passed, and are still passing! ‘Oh! for an hour of Dundee!’

“No one will pretend that he was free from all infirmities of character and conduct, though they have often been grossly exaggerated. Great temptations proverbially beset the pathway of great powers; and one who can overcome almost everything else may sometimes fail of conquering himself. He never assumed to be faultless; and he would have indignantly rebuked

any one who assumed it for him. We all know that, while he could master the great questions of national finance, and was never weary in maintaining the importance of upholding the national credit, he never cared quite enough about his own finances, or took particular pains to preserve his own personal credit. We all know that he was sometimes impatient of differences, and sometimes arrogant and overbearing toward opponents. His own consciousness of surpassing powers, and the flatteries—I had almost said, the idolatries—of innumerable friends, would account for much more of all this than he ever displayed. I have known him in all his moods. I have experienced the pain of his frown, as well as the charms of his favor. And I will acknowledge that I had rather confront him as he is here, to-day, in bronze, than encounter his opposition in the flesh. His antagonism was tremendous. ‘Safest he who stood aloof.’ But his better nature always asserted itself in the end. No man or woman or child could be more tender and affectionate.

“And there is one element of his character which must never be forgotten. I mean his deep religious faith and trust. I recall the delight with which he often conversed on the Bible. I recall the delight with which he dwelt on that exquisite prayer of one of the old prophets, repeating it fervently as a model of eloquence and of devotion: ‘Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the field shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.’ I recall his impressive and powerful plea for the religious instruction of the young, in the memorable case of Girard College. I have been with him on the most solemn occasions, in Boston and at Washington, in the midst of the most exciting and painful controversies, kneeling by his side at the table of our common Master, and witnessing the humility and reverence of his worship. And who has forgotten those last words which he ordered to be in-

scribed, and which are inscribed, on his tombstone at Marshfield :

“ ‘Lord, I believe ; help Thou mine unbelief.’ Philosophical argument, especially that drawn from the vastness of the universe, in comparison with the apparent insignificance of this globe, has sometimes shaken my reason for the faith which is in me ; but my heart has always assured and reassured me that the Gospel of Jesus Christ must be a divine reality. The Sermon on the Mount cannot be a merely human production. This belief enters into the very depth of my conscience. The whole history of man proves it.—DANIEL WEBSTER.

“I cannot help wishing that this declaration, in all its original fulness, were engraved on one of the sides of yonder monumental base, in letters which all the world might read. Amid all the perplexities which modern science, intentionally or unintentionally, is multiplying and magnifying around us, what consolation and strength must ever be found in such an expression of faith from that surpassing intellect !

“I congratulate you, my friends, that your Park is to be permanently adorned with this grand figure, and that the inscription on its massive pedestal is to associate it forever with the great principle of ‘Union and Liberty, one and inseparable.’ Nor can I conclude without saying that, from all I have ever known of Mr. Webster’s feelings, nothing could have gratified him so much as that, in this Centennial Year, on this memorable anniversary, nearly a quarter of a century after he had gone to his rest—when all the partialities and prejudices, all the love and the hate, which wait upon the career of living public men, should have grown cold or passed away—a statue of himself should be set up here, within the limits of your magnificent city, and amid these superb surroundings. Quite apart from those personal and domestic ties which rendered New York so dear to him—of which we have a touching reminder in the presence of the venerable lady who was so long the sharer of his name and the ornament of his home—quite apart from all such considerations, he would have

appreciated such a tribute as this, I think, above all other posthumous honors.

“There was something congenial to him in the grandeur of this great commercial metropolis. He loved, indeed, the hills and valleys of New Hampshire, among which he was born. He delighted in Marshfield and the shores of Plymouth, where he was buried. He was warmly attached to Boston and the people of Massachusetts, among whom he had lived so long, and from whom he had so often received his commissions as their Representative and their Senator in Congress. But in your noble city, as he said, he recognized ‘the commercial capital, not only of the United States, but of the whole continent from the pole to the South Sea.’ ‘The growth of this city,’ said he, ‘and the Constitution of the United States are coevals and contemporaries.’ ‘New York herself,’ he exclaimed, ‘is the noblest eulogy on the Union of the States.’ He delighted to remember that here Washington was first inaugurated as President, and that here had been the abode of Hamilton and

John Jay and Rufus King. And it was at a banquet given to him at your own Niblo's Garden, in 1837, and under the inspiration of these associations, that he summed up the whole lesson of the past and the whole duty of the future, and condensed them into a sentiment which has ever since entered into the circulating medium of true patriotism, like an ingot of gold with the impress of the eagle: 'One country, one Constitution, one destiny.'

"Let that motto, still and ever, be the watchword of the hour, and, whatever momentary perplexities or perils may environ us, with the blessing of God, no permanent harm can happen to our republic!

"In behalf of my fellow-citizens of New England, I thank Mr. Burnham for this great gift to your Central Park; and I congratulate him on having associated his name with so splendid a tribute to so illustrious a man. A New-Englander himself, he long ago decorated one of the chief cities of his native State with a noble statue

of a venerated father of the Church to which he belongs. He has now adorned the city of his residence with this grand figure of a preëminent American statesman. He has thus doubly secured for himself the grateful remembrance of all by whom Religion and Patriotism, Churchmanship and Statesmanship, shall be held worthy of commemoration and honor, in all time to come."

On the conclusion of Mr. Winthrop's address, a fine band of music, which had played before the ceremonies and between the addresses, struck at once into our national airs, while the cheers of the assembled multitude gave the appropriate close to the proceedings.

The celebration of the event was fitly completed by a brilliant reception and entertainment at the house of Mr. Burnham, in the evening of the day of inauguration, which was attended by a large company, among whom

were many of the most eminent persons in the country, who had assembled to do honor to the memory of Mr. Webster.

Upon the wall opposite the head of the table in the dining-room hung a faithful portrait of Mr. Webster, appropriately decorated with flowers, evergreens, and immortelles, showing below in a bold relief of white flowers the inscription of his last words—

“ I S T I L L L I V E . ”

And on a stand below were placed additional personal memorials—his familiar costume of the blue coat with gilt buttons and buff waistcoat—the old Whig colors which he always delighted to honor.

APPENDIX.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC PARKS.

THE correspondence between Mr. BURNHAM and the Park Commissioners, in which the site for the statue was finally determined, ended with the following letters communicating the action of the Board :

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC PARKS,
GENERAL OFFICE, 36 UNION SQUARE, N. Y., COR. 16TH STREET, }
October 6, 1874.

GORDON W. BURNHAM, Esq., New York City.

DEAR SIR: I take pleasure in sending you a certified copy of the resolutions passed in relation to the proposed site for the statue of Webster, which you so generously propose to present to the city of New York.

These resolutions were unanimously passed by the Commissioners, and are, in my judgment, regarded with favor by the community at large.

I am sure they will be respected by our successors, and the spot

now selected sacredly held for the statue of Webster, until the artist selected to execute the important work shall have completed his labors.

Respectfully yours,

HENRY G. STEBBINS,

President D. P. P.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC PARKS,
GENERAL OFFICE, 36 UNION SQUARE, N. Y., COR. 16TH STREET, }
October 6, 1874.

GORDON W. BURNHAM, Esq., 128 Fifth Avenue.

SIR: The following resolutions were adopted by the Board governing this Department, at a meeting held on the 25th September last, namely:

“*Resolved*, That the Board would be gratified to be able to place a worthy colossal statue, in bronze, of Daniel Webster, on the Central Park, in accordance with the munificent proposition of Gordon W. Burnham, Esq.

“*Resolved*, That, pending the undertaking of Mr. Burnham, the site at the junction of the Middle and West Drives, south of the lake, shall be reserved against any other permanent use or appropriation than that proposed by him.”

Yours respectfully,

WM. IRWIN,

Secretary D. P. P.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF
NEW YORK.

ON November 27, 1876, the Board of Aldermen of the city of New York unanimously adopted the following preamble and resolutions, which were duly presented to Mr. Burnham :

“ *Whereas*, GORDON W. BURNHAM, Esq., having placed in the Central Park, at his own expense, the colossal statue in bronze of DANIEL WEBSTER, with the granite pedestal on which it stands, did, on the 25th day of November, instant, present the same to the city: now, therefore—

“ *Resolved*, That the Mayor, Aldermen, and Commonalty of the city of New York, appreciating the illustrious character and services of the statesman to whom this monument is raised, and rejoicing in the possession of a work of art which is so notable itself, and which so eloquently incites to patriotism and to devotion to

the Constitution, do now, in grateful recognition of this renewed expression of the munificence and public spirit of an honored fellow-citizen, present their thanks to GORDON W. BURNHAM for his memorable gift.

“*Resolved*, That the Mayor be, and hereby is, requested to forward to Mr. Burnham an engrossed copy of the foregoing preamble and resolution, duly attested.”

DESCRIPTION OF THE STATUE.

THE engraving of the statue which accompanies this publication renders it unnecessary to give any formal or technical description. It was modelled in Florence, and cast at the celebrated foundery in Munich.

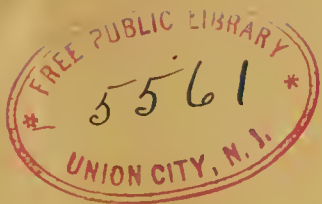
The size and dimensions of the whole work are as follows:

The foundation, commencing sixteen feet below the surface, is laid in cement upon a solid rock.

The pedestal, designed by Messrs. BATTERSON, CANFIELD & Co., of Hartford, Connecticut, is of Quincy granite. It is twenty feet in height; a single stone used in its construction weighs thirty-three tons, and the whole weight of the pedestal is about one hundred and twenty-five tons.

The figure, which is of bronze, is fourteen feet in height, and its weight is six tons.

The whole work thus stands thirty-four feet above the surface of the Park.



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